A Place To Turn When You're Discouraged

"Up: Encouraging Words In Discouraging Times", Part 2 of 3
Pastor Vince DiPaola

"Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; my eyes grow weak with sorrow, my soul and my body with grief. My life is consumed by anguish and my years by groaning; my strength fails because of my affliction, and my bones grow weak. Because of all my enemies, I am the utter contempt of my neighbors; I am a dread to my friends— those who see me on the street flee from me. I am forgotten by them as though I were dead; I have become like broken pottery. For I hear the slander of many; there is terror on every side; they conspire against me and plot to take my life."
(Psalm 31:9-13, NIV)

I) DRIVING FORCES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

1) Unusually painful ___CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE___.

2) Unwisely planned ___CHOICES WE MAKE___.

3) Unfairly placed ___CRITICISM FROM OTHERS___.

II) ESSENTIAL HELP FOR ENCOURAGEMENT

"In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me. Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. Free me from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge. Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O LORD, the God of truth. I hate those who cling to worthless idols; I trust in the LORD. I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul. You have not handed me over to the enemy but have set my feet in a spacious place." (Psalm 31:1-8, NIV)

***When you're discouraged, ___RUN TO GOD FOR REFUGE___.**

How To Make God Your Refuge
(And How He Will Respond)

1) __TRUST__: God _DIVINELY DELIVERS US_ from critical people.

"But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in your hands; deliver me from my enemies and from those who pursue me. Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love. Let me not be put to shame, O LORD, for I have cried out to you; but let the wicked be put to shame and lie silent in the grave. Let their lying lips be silenced, for with pride and contempt they speak arrogantly against the righteous." (Psalm 31:14-18, NIV)

***How: ___PLEASE GOD FIRST___!**

"When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him." (Proverbs 16:7, NIV)

2) __FEAR__: God_GIVES GENEROUS GRACE_for personal failings.

"How great is your goodness, which you have stored up for those who fear you, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you. In the shelter of your presence you hide them from the intrigues of men; in your dwelling you keep them safe from accusing tongues. Praise be to the LORD, for he showed his wonderful love to me when I was in a besieged city. In my alarm I said, 'I am cut off from your sight!' Yet you heard my cry for mercy when I called to you for help." (Psalm 31:19-22, NIV)

***How: ___RECEIVE GOD'S GRACE___!**

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."
(2 Corinthians 12:9a, NIV)

3) __HOPE__: God _PERFECTLY PRESERVES US_ in painful trials.

"Love the LORD, all his saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full. Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD."
(Psalm 31:23-24, NIV)

***How: ___PRAY FOR GOD'S STRENGTH___!**

"But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit." (Jude 20, NIV)